

MEMORIAL
OF
REV. THOMAS H. STOCKTON.


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LIFE, CHARACTER, AND DEATH

DEC 1 1931

OF

REV. THOMAS H. STOCKTON,

BEING

THE FUNERAL ADDRESS DELIVERED OCT. 14th. 1868,

AND

THE MEMORIAL DISCOURSE DELIVERED NOV. 22d, 1868,

IN THE

CHURCH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT,

Corner of Eleventh and Wood Streets.

✓
BY JOHN G. WILSON,

MINISTER OF THE WORD OF GOD.

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He was a burning and a shining light, and ye were willing for a season  
to rejoice in his light.—*John v. 35.*  
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PHILADELPHIA:

CLAXTON, REMSEN & HAFFELFINGER,

Nos. 819 and 821 MARKET STREET,

1869.

This Memorial, in its brief survey of the career of Mr. STOCKTON, is not intended to supersede his Memoir, largely composed of his diary and letters, which, it is to be presumed, will, in due time, be published; but only to precede and awaken a more intense desire for it, as that will open to us, chiefly in his own language, a view of his interior life in connection with its external manifestations.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1869, by

J. G. WILSON,

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Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

FUNERAL ADDRESS.

MAN, born of woman, is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth as a flower, and is cut down. He fleeth, also, as a shadow, and continueth not. Whatever is frail and perishable in its nature, whatever is transient in its duration, is an emblem of man, who at his best estate is altogether vanity. For what is your life? It is even a vapor which appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away. For we must needs die, and are as water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; and God is no respecter of persons; all must die, whatever may be their rank and condition in life; the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the young and the old, the saint and the sinner find a common level in the grave. For by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that one man's sin was imputed to them all. And when God said, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," the sentence

passed upon you and me, and on all mankind. Neither can any man redeem his brother, or give to GOD a ransom for him that he should not die. But GOD, who is no respecter of persons, in visiting upon all men the penalty of Adam's sin, is no respecter of persons in the provision he hath made for the recovery of all men from that penalty. And he gave his only begotten Son, JESUS CHRIST, to be the Redeemer of the world, and, as the second Adam, by his obedience in that relation, he hath procured life for all. For as by the offence of Adam the many were made sinners, and the judgment came upon all men to condemnation; so by the obedience of JESUS CHRIST, the many are made righteous, and the free gift hath come upon all men unto justification of life. And as in Adam all die, even so in CHRIST shall all be made alive. Since Adam sinned, there may have one hundred and fifty thousand millions of mankind fallen under the penalty of death, and thousands more are daily going down to the grave. But this course of things shall not continue forever. An era of life is coming, when HE who invaded the realm of death and hell, and took the keys thereof, shall unlock their portals; and it shall come to pass that all that are in those gloomy caverns shall hear his voice and shall come forth. For JESUS said: "The hour

cometh when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and live." Hence we have hope towards God that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. As no man dies for his own sin, but all die because Adam sinned; so no man shall be raised again for his own righteousness, but all shall be raised again because CHRIST obeyed the law, and made it honorable. In this connection we all have sin in Adam and righteousness in CHRIST; condemnation in Adam and justification in CHRIST; death in Adam and life in CHRIST.

But will there be no distinction in the resurrection between the just and the unjust? Yes, verily; for every man shall be made alive again in *his own order*—in the order which will be determined by his own conduct—which will be appropriate to his own character. The order will have respect to both time and condition. In regard to time, the dead in CHRIST—the saints—believers in JESUS—shall rise FIRST. For this we say unto you by the word of the LORD, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the LORD, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the LORD himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in CHRIST shall rise FIRST.

And this order of time shall not be merely for a few seconds, or a few hours, but it will be for more than a thousand years ; for John says, " The rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were finished." As it regards condition ; the first resurrection is styled the resurrection of life : that is, eternal life, a phrase which indicates the peculiar reward of all true believers,* whose faith, working by love, tends to purity of heart : for JESUS said, " This is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, shall have *eternal life* ; and I will raise him up again at the last day." There are different conditions of life, as there are different kinds of bodies ; but it is only necessary to mention two in this connection. There is a natural life and a spiritual life ; and a natural body and a spiritual body ; belonging to an earthly condition and a heavenly condition : and which are illustrated in the first man, Adam, who was of the earth, earthy, and the second man, CHRIST, who is the LORD from heaven. The first was made a living soul, the second was made a quickening spirit. The natural life might have been perpetuated for ever by the means divinely provided for the sustenance and healthfulness of the natural body ; and had Adam not sinned, those means would have been continually accessible ; but

having transgressed, he, and all his posterity with him, were excluded from the Garden of Eden, lest he should eat of the tree of life, and so live for ever. But the perpetuation of natural life, by suitable means, is not eternal life. By the obedience of the second Adam, the free gift cometh on all men unto justification of life, that is, the life forfeited by the disobedience of the first Adam, the natural life in natural bodies. And there will, doubtless, be appropriate means, divinely appointed, for the perpetuation of that life forever, under the future administration of the second Adam. But eternal life is a special gift, flowing, not from CHRIST'S obedience as the second Adam, but from his sacrificial offering as our Great High Priest, in making atonement for our personal transgressions; and it is given only to them that believe. For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life. John iii. 16. And this is the record that God hath given us (believers) eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 1 John v. 11. He that hath the Son hath life (eternal life). He that hath not the Son of God, hath not life (eternal life). The eternal life, which is the condition promised to believers, is the specialty of the first resurrection, when the bodies

of all the saints will be changed, that they may be fashioned like unto CHRIST's glorious body, and made incorruptible, immortal, and spiritual.

And that condition will be a glorious one. John says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is." And Paul says, "When CHRIST who is our LIFE shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." "And if (we be) children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with CHRIST: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." And JESUS says, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am: that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." "And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one." Hence it is written; "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of GOD and of CHRIST and shall reign with him a thousand years." Again, "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to GOD by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation; and

hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth."

O what an exalted state! O what a glorious condition! O what a blessed company! The church of God in its completeness and perfection, embracing the called and chosen and faithful of every age and of every clime, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb: embracing all who "having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise." Their bodies now sleep in the dust, their spirits now rest in God; who has provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him. And with these precious words of truth—these doctrines of inspiration I would comfort your hearts under the bereavement which has brought us together to-day.

We stand here in the face of death. There lie the remains of our departed brother THOMAS HEWLINGS STOCKTON. We have known him long and intimately. We have loved him as long and fervently. His life—his natural life—

was beleagured by death from his childhood up. Disease had early invaded his body, and we little thought that the pale, slender, delicate young man of forty years ago, save one, would have so long maintained the struggle against the king of terrors. But GOD had a work for him to do, and he strung that attenuated body with sinewy muscles, and so balanced the power of endurance with the susceptibility of pain and weakness that his years have been lengthened out to threescore. Yet have they been years of physical suffering—patiently and joyfully endured in submission to the will of HIM who never causes us a needless pang. That affliction was blest to him in his youth, we gather from his first published article written in his sixteenth year :

“When floods of sorrow o’er my spirits roll,
When storms of passion rage within my soul,
Where shall I find for these the joy of grief?
Where seek, for those, a curb of calm relief?
‘A small, still voice’ speaks softly in my breast :
Rise ; follow ME, sad soul ! and gain eternal rest.
Thus whispers PIETY, to whom is given
Immortal joy—a foretaste e’en of heaven.
Attend her call, my soul ! from error cease ;
Walk in her paths : for ‘all her paths are peace.’
Then let grief come, let sorrow rend my frame,
I’ll humbly kiss the rod, and bless JEHOVAH’s name.”

From another of his poems entitled “A

Mother's Prayer," wherein she claimed forgiveness and salvation for her children, it appears that his mother's death was the occasion of his conversion to God;

"And was she answered? Soon that mother died,
And left her children in a world of pride.
Yet, scarcely had she praised the LORD above,
Before her children sung redeeming love;
And while rejoicings sounded round the Throne,
Their grateful voices mingled with her own."

He entered upon the Gospel ministry in the year 1829, and from the first was distinguished by a glowing eloquence, the effects of which were heightened by his almost superhuman appearance. In the fall of 1829, then just entering on the ministry myself, I heard him for the first time, nor shall I ever forget his voice and manner, or lose the impression made upon my mind, as the vanity of earthly things and the eternal excellency of religion, were placed in vivid contrast, in the final results from their pursuit, to their respective votaries.—I have often, since then, heard him preach more eloquent, more argumentative, more impressive sermons, which have deservedly won for him a reputation for unexcelled pulpit eloquence: but that sermon seems to me to be preached over again by the silent lips of our beloved one as he lies in that coffin: for he being dead, yet

speaketh. Religion was with him, through life, the principal thing. He lived in close communion with God: and though conscious of the possession of so rare and valuable a gift, he never seemed in the least elated by it. He had learned from Paul that lesson, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And his soul was so filled with that heaven-born charity, that divine love, that every mental faculty, every natural gift, and every useful acquirement were tempered by it. With him, truly, charity was the bond of perfectness. It added a heavenly habitude to the garments of the soul; it shed its holy anointing upon his head; it gave its lustre to his eye, and poured its grace into his lips. It bound his heart to God. It opened his affections to his fellow men. It made him kind, tender, loving, faithful and true in all the relations of life. In short it made him a Christian, and "a Christian" is the highest style of man."

His demise occurred last Friday evening, after an attack of several weeks duration of chronic diarrhœa accompanied with dropsy, by which he suffered beyond expression, yet with his characteristic patience and quiet submission to God. When the attack subsided and those

forms of disease abated, he felt himself apparently better, and thought that possibly it might be the will of God that he should measurably recover, and yet again stand up for JESUS, in the ranks of God's faithful ambassadors. But the old difficulty of the lungs, which had left him during the other attack, resumed its sway, and all recuperative power was gone. The hour had come when our brother must die. And peacefully, trustfully, hopefully he entered the valley of the shadow of death, leaning on the arm of JESUS, resting in the love of JESUS, and falling asleep on the bosom of JESUS. "O blessed sleep! From which none ever wake to weep."

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the LORD, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

"Servant of God, well done;

Rest from thy loved employ:

The battle fought, the victory won,

Enter thy Master's joy."

Bereaved ones—children, and other relatives of the deceased, let your grief for his loss be accompanied by submission to God's will, and thankfulness for his release from suffering. Could he now speak, he would, doubtless, ad-

dress you in the language of his own mother when dying, "Rejoice with me!" And let it be your constant aim to copy his example, and live so that you may be united in a better world, and—

"There when we meet with holy joy,
No thoughts of parting come;
But everlasting ages still,
Shall find us all at home."

Church of the New Testament. Noble remnant of the fruits of his ministry; you have been steadfast in your attachment to your pastor to the end. It was in his heart to die and live with you. He wished to end his days in fellowship with you, as a church of JESUS CHRIST. The faithfulness of a few, in continuing this organization under discouraging circumstances, has consummated that wish. His benediction is upon you—May you all be faithful to the end of your Christian course, and so at last consummate his wish to live with you forever in the land of glory—the kingdom of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Dear friends, one and all, you see in this coffin the earthly house of one who had nothing in his heart but love towards you and towards all men. He was not a bigoted sectarist: but an earnest life long advocate of Christian union among all who name the name of CHRIST. But his work is done He rests in JESUS. *Amen.*

MEMORIAL DISCOURSE.

PRAYER OF MOSES, THE MAN OF GOD.—*LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of Adam. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass, which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath we are troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. For all our days are passed away in thy wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*

Return, O LORD, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants. O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may be glad and rejoice all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen

evil. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the LORD our GOD be upon us ; and establish thou the work of our hands upon us ; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.—OUR FATHER, which art in heaven ; hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation ; but deliver us from evil ; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

HE WAS A BURNING AND A SHINING LIGHT ; AND YE WERE WILLING FOR A SEASON TO REJOICE IN HIS LIGHT. *John v. 35.*

IN effecting the redemption of the world, GOD has appointed times and seasons ; constituted ages and dispensations ; and ordained agencies and instrumentalities ; which, however deficient, inadequate and feeble, apparently, in human estimation, are adapted, in his wisdom, to secure the accomplishment of his purpose in reconciling all things unto himself by JESUS CHRIST. But, until the end is reached, in the dispensation of the fullness of times, and the mystery of GOD shall be finished, it will seem to man's judgment, as if the measures employed had utterly failed of the attainment of

their object. When, however, that object shall have been attained, as it most assuredly will be, then the Divine Wisdom will be justified in every stage of its progress, in every measure of its economy, and in every part of its operations. Then, too, wisdom will be justified of all her children, however different their habits, however diversified their talents, however varied their success. Then, the character and work of all God's servants will be vindicated, and every one will receive due praise of God. Then, shall the mistakes of ages be rectified; and it will be seen, that, in all the apparent inequality of the times, the defectiveness of the dispensations and inefficiency of the means, God was, from the beginning, all through the great cycle of redemption, accomplishing a foreseen and predestined result, redounding alike to the manifestations of his glory and the praise of his goodness. And then, in the elect church, glorified with CHRIST, "he will show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through CHRIST JESUS." Then, "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever." Then, the burning and shining lights of the ages and dispensations of grace, which for a season shed their rays of Gospel truth

upon the dark world around them, shall again appear as stars of the first magnitude, whose volume of light shall never more be diminished, whose brightness shall never more pale, and whose personal, moral, intellectual and conditional glory shall be second only to His who is "the brightness of the FATHER's glory and the express image of his person." Then, shall our dear departed brother, to the reminiscences of whose life and character we devote this discourse, shine as the peer of the most humble in spirit, pure in heart, chaste in conversation, sanctified in intellect, brilliant in imagination, eloquent in oratory, catholic in christian fellowship and sincere in the love of the truth. Like John the Baptist, "he was a burning and a shining light, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." Astronomers tell us, that there are stars so distant from the earth, that their first rays of light, traveling, with the rapidity of a sunbeam, from the creation until now, have not yet reached us. It may be so, and if so, then, if those distant orbs were removed from their stations, their emitted rays might reach us to gladden our eyes long after the stars themselves had perished. We moralize this dogma, and rejoice that though death has removed from us the person of our ministerial friend and brother, it has not extin-

guished his light. His station in the Gospel firmament is vacant, but the great truths he taught, and the principles he advocated, still shine on, whether heeded or not by those who forget him: for "he being dead, yet speaketh." While he lived, though, by reason of physical prostration, prevented from appearing in the pulpit and preaching to the people as in former years, yet his very presence among us seemed to remind us of the past, and connect us with his eloquent ministrations. But now, that his eyes are closed in the sleep of death, and his voice is hushed in the stillness of the grave; now, that his well-known and almost supernatural form is prostrate in the dust, we want a photograph, taken in his prime, to aid our recollection of his personal appearance, and some friendly reminiscences of his "doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecutions and afflictions, to revivify the impressions made upon our hearts and minds by the sublimity of the language and power of utterance, with which he was wont to proclaim the truths he loved. To furnish these, in a loving, though brief, yet comprehensive and just survey of an acquaintance of nearly forty years, is the object of our aspiration.

THOMAS HEWLINGS STOCKTON was born at

Mount Holly, in Burlington county, New Jersey, June 4th, 1808—and died in the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, October 9th, 1868—aged sixty years four months and five days, in which period is comprised a life, geographically limited to a few States of the Union, but sympathetically outstretching the continent, and making the world its own; a life chronologically restricted to threescore years, but meditatively existing through coming ages, and seeking to realize in the present the hopes he entertained for the future; a life therefore in advance of his own time.

His parents and their ancestors, for generations, were respectable, intelligent and pious; and without disparagement to other branches of the family, we may be allowed to say, that their noblest qualities of mind and heart appear to have culminated in their talented descendant and worthy representative.

His father, WILLIAM S. STOCKTON, “son of two of the earliest Methodists in the State” of New Jersey,—“a simple-hearted, active-minded, observant, thoughtful, honest, earnest, zealous, sanguine, American freeman and Christian, desiring and aiming only to do good, and setting so much value on all great rights and interests as to be willing to toil and make sacrifices in their behalf,” was the originator, in

1821 of "the Wesleyan Repository," one object of which was to discuss such reforms as were deemed desirable in the ecclesiastical polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This was at a time when the son was of an age to become deeply interested in such matters, and to this publication, and the controversy growing out of it, we may trace the radical views of Mr. Stockton on Church government, as we trace most of his doctrinal views to his early Methodist training. His estimate of Methodism spiritual and ecclesiastical we give in his own language. He said, in a discourse delivered March 11th, 1855: "Primitive Methodism appears to have been the purest and most useful revival of the truth as it is in JESUS ever known in the history of the church. Even in its present numerous and diverse forms, I think it may be said of it, with entire propriety, at least in relation to our own country, that—if Providence should decree that only one of the existing systems of Christian agency should remain in existence after this night, there is reason to desire that it might be, and to believe that it would be, the great Methodist system—the most hopeful of all, by far, in view of the salvation of the people at large. But, originally, Methodism was only spiritual. Since then it has become ecclesiastical. Its

spiritual character has always been its glory. Its ecclesiastical character has always been its shame. From the beginning, its government has been an intermitting volcano: starting, at various intervals, into flaming eruption, and filling the circuit of its power with saddest devastations. Alas! for all man's governments! Alas! for all *over-government*—all UNYIELDING government—all IDOLIZED government! Would to GOD that CHRIST might be confessed all in all—that the time might be hastened in which ‘the government shall be upon his shoulder’ and no where else—in which his people shall be ‘not without law to God, but under the law to CHRIST,’ and to no one else.”

At first he designed to become a physician, and commenced the study of medicine with Doctor Thomas Dunn, of Philadelphia, in company with two other young men, Samuel, one of the Doctor's sons, and Gamaliel Bailey, who became his fast friends through life, and who, contrary to all their expectations, died before him, an instance of the uncertainty of calculations of long life based upon physical health. On one occasion when they were conversing about their prospects for the future, Samuel, tall and athletic, smiting his broad, expansive chest, said that he considered himself good for at least fifty years; Gamaliel, robust and well

set, regarded his prospects as equally fair; while our friend, slender and delicate, said nothing, but only looked the doubt with which he regarded his chances for many years; and they would say to each other: "Poor fellow! he cannot live long."

Samuel Dunn finished his studies, graduated, went to Mississippi, married there, practiced medicine a number of years, and was the first to put off the earthly tabernacle. Gamaliel Bailey also graduated, but being of a more literary turn, became an editor, first, by recommendation of Mr. Stockton, of the Methodist Protestant Church paper, and afterwards of an anti-slavery periodical, which he finally removed to Washington, called it the "National Era," and conducted with marked ability until he also, several years ago, fell by the shaft of death. A different course was marked out, in the Providence of God for Thomas H. Stockton. The expulsion of a number of the reformers from the Methodist Episcopal Church in Baltimore, Cincinnati, and other places, had given rise to the organization of Associated Methodist Churches, and occasioned a demand for young men of piety and talent to enter the ministry. And among others, Mr. Stockton, who, in 1828, had united in marriage with Anna R. McCurdy,

a sister of the late John R. McCurdy, was moved to employ the gift which God had bestowed upon him, in preaching the Gospel. Having, in 1829, preached once or twice in Philadelphia, and being approved by the brethren, he was received into the Maryland Annual Conference, and stationed on the Eastern Shore. Here he captivated all hearts by his unrivalled eloquence, combined with a meek and unassuming deportment, and the almost heavenly expression of his countenance, while pleading with man for God. Here he was heard for the first time by Amelia Welby, who has immortalized the occasion and the orator by her sweet poem, entitled *Pulpit Eloquence*, from which we extract a few lines :

“Such language as his I may never recall ;
But his theme was salvation—salvation to all ;
And the souls of a thousand in ecstasy hung
On the manna-like sweetness that dropped from his
tongue ;
Not alone on the ear his wild eloquence stole ;
Enforced by each gesture it sank to the soul,
'Till it seemed that an angel had brightened the sod,
And brought to each bosom a message from God.
He spake, and it seemed that his statue-like form
Expanded and glowed as his spirit grew warm—
His tone so impassioned, so melting his air,
As touched with compassion, he ended in prayer

His hands clasped above him, his blue orbs up-
thrown,

Still pleading for sins that were never his own,

While that mouth, where such sweetness ineffable
clung,

Still spoke, though expression had died on his
tongue.

O, God! what emotions the speaker awoke!

A mortal he seemed—yet a deity spoke;

A man—yet so far from humanity riven!

On earth—yet so closely connected with heaven!

How oft, in my fancy, I've pictured him there,

As he stood in that triumph of passion and prayer.

With his eyes closed in rapture—their transient
eclipse

Made bright by the smile, that illumined his lips.

Here, also, at the residence of Judge Hopper, an incident occurred illustrative of his wonderful power of description. A young colored man was appointed to wait upon Mr. Stockton, who embraced the opportunity, thus offered, to enlighten a dark mind and win a soul to JESUS. One morning Mr. Stockton asked him whether he would not like to go to heaven? assuring him that it was a beautiful and glorious place, and giving a vivid description of it, as only he was capable of doing. His auditor listened with absorbed attention—eyes and mouth open—and as soon as Mr. Stockton ceased, exclaimed in wondering inquiry: "La, Massa Stockton; you bin dar?"

In 1830 he was appointed a delegate to, and attended the convention which formed the Constitution and Discipline of the Methodist Protestant Church. In the same year he was stationed at Baltimore in charge of two churches, where his reputation for eloquence, having preceded him, attracted large and attentive auditories. The labor was, however, too much for his physical strength, and, in 1831, he was appointed missionary at large, on account of feeble health. He was benefited by the year's exemption from a regular charge, and sufficiently recuperated to resume his labors in 1832, when he was again stationed on the Eastern Shore, with his home at Easton, in Talbot County, where he formed many pleasant acquaintances and lasting friendships. In 1833-4, he was stationed at Georgetown, D. C., and while there, was elected Chaplain to Congress; and his fame as a preacher became as widespread as the Union. A Senator, speaking of his sermons in the Hall, said, that the members of both Houses were taken by surprise, and the general opinion seemed to be, that, in his first effort, he had plumed himself for his highest flight; and that he could not possibly keep it up. But when the second exceeded the first, and the third surpassed the second, and each succeeding one seemed more excellent than the

preceding, and withal so simple, unassuming and devout, they passed into the highest admiration of his talents, and regard for his piety. The celebrated William Wirt, who regularly attended the services, was wont to call him Nature's Orator; and Henry Clay styled him the most eloquent man in America.

After the adjournment of Congress, in the the spring of 1835, he travelled West as agent for the Methodist Protestant Book Concern, representing its interest and soliciting funds for its establishment; returning at the reassembling of Congress to his post as Chaplain. During this period he became acquainted with most of the eminent men in Washington; and we have frequently heard him speak of certain celebrities, with such nice and just discrimination of character and talents, as showed that he had fully weighed them in his comprehensive and analytical mind.

In 1836-7, he was again stationed at St. John's Church, in Baltimore, where he was highly esteemed and useful. During his pastorate here, an abscess was developed on his right lung; and a visit to Charleston, South Carolina, was made for the benefit of his health. In 1838, the General Conference elected him editor of the "Methodist Protestant;" but the Book Committee, fearing he might conduct it too

liberally for the Southern latitude, imposed certain restrictions upon the editorship, which left to him no other course than to resign, for his free-born spirit could not brook a chain. Others could be found willing to compromise self-respect and freedom of thought and speech for position; but it was not in him to do so. Fidelity to God and the truth and the Church forbade it. At the same time he resigned his charge of St. John's Church, and removed to Philadelphia. Here he was at first employed by the Philadelphia Institute, and preached in their hall on Filbert street, to large and appreciative congregations. His preaching was remarkable for its power, not only to captivate the understanding, but to melt the heart. A gentleman, an acquaintance of ours, assigned as a reason for discontinuing to attend his ministry, that he could not stand it; Mr. Stockton made a baby of him, that he could do nothing but weep. A few years later we had a personal experience of this melting influence under a sermon he preached at Belair Camp Meeting, Hartford County, Maryland, from the words, "GOD IS LOVE. It was in demonstration of the Spirit and power. Believers were edified, and sinners were turned from Satan to God.

In 1839 he organized a number of believers

into a Methodist Church. In 1840 they commenced building this meeting house (on the corner of Eleventh and Wood streets), which in 1841 was dedicated with appropriate religious services. Here until 1847 he continued to preach to the people the unsearchable riches of CHRIST; and for three years the Church flourished finely; many being added to the LORD through his ministry. It was during this period, also, that he turned his attention to some literary labors in connection with his ministerial work. First he issued a neat little monthly sheet, entitled "The Methodist Protestant Letter Press," which, however, soon gave place to the "Christian World," devoted to the development of "Bible Christianity"—"Its first principle—the oneness of mankind; its second—the oneness of Christians." It comprises several volumes, and was conducted with marked ability, though of too high an order to be generally popular, and too far advanced in Christian liberality for the times; and, therefore, successful to only a limited extent. It was "not Anti-Sectarian; but unsectarian and super-sectarian; not opposed to any of the sects, not connected with any, but above all." It was the work which tended to the rapid expansion of Mr. Stockton's views on Christian union; carrying him so far above

and beyond the sects, as to desire nothing better or nobler for them all, than a complete fusion in the crucible of Divine love, and a new moulding in the unity of the faith, and knowledge of the Son of God.

The conducting and editing of this periodical, added greatly to his labors, and employed much of his time, justifying his own remark that he had "too many engagements." He needed an assistant, but the means were wanting to employ one.

By the General Conference of 1838, the Maryland District of the Methodist Protestant Church, was made to embrace all the Eastern part of Pennsylvania, south of the Blue Ridge; and as it was deemed advisable that Mr. Stockton should continue at this Church, it was made a mission, that it might be exempted from the operation of the restrictive rule, which indicated that ministers should not be continued in stations and circuits longer than two years at a time. This gave rise to what was called the Mission question, which was, that churches might be made Missions with a view to the accommodation of special interests. The advocates of exclusive itinerancy took alarm, and commenced an opposition to the measure; causing much contention, whereby not only was the work of the Lord hindered,

but much of the good already accomplished was destroyed. When the contention was at its height, the Conference held its session in Mr. Stockton's church, and diffused the virus through the Church, finally resulting in the secession of a part of the membership.

In 1846 Mr. Stockton was sent by the churches of Philadelphia as a special messenger to the General Conference; to request that all Eastern Pennsylvania to the Susquehanna River, and south of the Blue Ridge, might be made the territory of a new Annual Conference, to be called the Philadelphia District, with liberty to operate under the Mission Rule, and so test its adaptation to the needs of the churches. In this mission he was successful, and the conference was organized; and in four years' time trebled the number of its members, and built two or three churches. But all this was reversed by the action of the next General Conference, which, instigated by the Exclusive Itinerants, annulled the Philadelphia District, and returned the churches to the jurisdiction of the Maryland Annual Conference, which now, after the lapse of eighteen years, has a single church and perhaps less than one hundred members, where there were then several churches and about fifteen hundred members.

In 1847 Mr. Stockton organized his "Chris-

tian Society of Brotherly Love," which had been contemplated by him for two years. It was designed "to supply the natural, spiritual and social need of its members and others, in the name, for the honor, according to the commandments of our LORD and Saviour JESUS CHRIST." Its two great principles were, "The Bible is the Book of GOD, and Private judgment is the duty and right of man." Though not claiming to be a church, it was in reality a church, simply a Christian church, acknowledging CHRIST as the only head, and the word of GOD as the only rule. Mr. Stockton's desire to avoid even the appearance of organizing a new sect prevented him from calling it by its proper name; and his strong attachment to the Methodist Protestant Church, notwithstanding his convictions of the defectiveness of that and all other sectarian denominations, disposed him rather to embody his views of a New Testament Church in the form of a society, which might exemplify Christianity in all its relations, and do what the sects failed to do; and then, reacting on the churches, incite them to a higher Christian standard, and a more thorough Christian work. He even wished his own church to remain Methodist Protestant, rather than to sever its sectarian connection and become simply a Christian Church. This, we think,

was the chief cause of his want of success in this enterprise. Another reason was, that his disapprobation of Secret Societies, which had been candidly stated at a Bible presentation of the Order of Sons of Temperance, at which he delivered an address, on condition that he should be allowed first to explain his position, and was subsequently more fully expressed, in contrasting them with the Christian Society of Brotherly Love, gave offence to many, who walked no more with him : counting him as an enemy, because he told them the truth. And so on these several accounts the number of his hearers was diminished.

About this time he received and accepted an invitation to take the pastoral charge of the Sixth Street Methodist Protestant Church of Cincinnati, and removed to that city, being succeeded in Philadelphia by J. T. Ward, of Washington, D. C., now President of the Methodist Protestant College, Westminster, Md.

In Cincinnati he remained three years—most of the time Pastor of the Sixth Street Church. The first winter he was seriously ill, not expected to live—but the LORD graciously raised him up and gave him strength to resume his labors. Here, if anywhere, with every thing pleasant in the pastoral connection, he might have contented himself with operating in that

limited sphere; but his soul burned with desire to be employed in more enlarged and wholly Christian relations. His plans had been previously explained in lectures delivered in the Sixth Street Church, and he supposed that the brethren would sympathize with him in endeavoring to carry them out. This had measurably influenced his removal from Philadelphia. In about two months after his arrival in Cincinnati, was formed "The Ladies Committee of Instruction and Relief," as preliminary to the organization of a "Christian Society of Brotherly Love." In the ensuing autumn he instituted a "Young Men's Reading Class;" and in the winter following a "Good Boy's Band." Other modes of doing good were proposed, dependent, however, upon funds, which were not furnished.

In the spring of 1849, he was elected President of the Miami University, and he says, "This appointment opened many a new and attractive vision, both of personal advantage and social usefulness. . . . And would afford great facilities for securing attention to favorite views and schemes of progress. But I always felt a repugnance to the mere influence of position. Alas! how hurtful has it often proved! The influence most to be desired is that of truth and righteousness, acknowledged without

thought of position." After considering the matter, he decided, in accordance with the expressed wishes of the Church and congregation, in the name of the LORD, and in hope of greater usefulness, to remain in Cincinnati. The object at which he aimed is indicated in the following memoranda, written at this time ; " If I could have my whole wish, in relation to the Church, it would be something like this : (To) show to the world, the Purity—the Simplicity—the Equality—the Unity—the Liberty—the GOD-like Love, of Bible Christianity. Away with all FALSE AUTHORITY in the Church of CHRIST." But he found that sectarian organizations clung so tenaciously to false authority, that all hope for the Church, in that connection, was at an end. And, having removed into the neighborhood of a vacant church edifice, it occurred to him that a beginning of an entirely unsectarian character might be commenced. He mentioned the matter to three brethren ; and made inquiry whether the house could be rented. Immediately the officary of the Church held a meeting, " in reference to certain reports in circulation, relating to a new Church or society, about to be started or put in operation by Brother Stockton, disconnected perhaps with our regular organization as a Church or Conference," and requested of him

“a written exposition of his views and wishes.” To which he replied, that he “could not pledge himself not to attempt the formation of such a Church at any time; though, he then had no design of doing so, because he had no encouragement.” Next, a Church meeting was called—the correspondence read—and the delegate to the Annual Conference instructed to ask for his reappointment, which was obtained. But the sensitive mind of our brother was wounded. And he says, “It seemed as though I should never find an opportunity of working for CHRIST alone, but must live and die the slave of a party; unless, indeed, I would break all bonds at once, by becoming Independent.” By a subsequent demand of the Church officary for all his time or none, the yoke became too oppressive to be borne, and, on the 24th of December, he sent his resignation to the Quarterly Conference, to take effect as soon as a successor should be provided. And the Quarterly Conference immediately released him from any further ministerial duties.

Now, for the first in his life, he had to hunt a place in which to preach: and the first place opened to him was the Unitarian Chapel. And so, laying aside some objections, not worthy to be cherished, he availed himself of this opening. The Church treated him with never forgotten

kindness ; persons of all denominations largely sustained the services, and he preached as freely as he could have done on the top of a mountain. Afterwards he occupied the Masonic Hall, a much more ample room ; and he says : “ May God abundantly reward the friends who have hitherto sheltered us ! enriching them, especially with all spiritual blessings in CHRIST JESUS.

After a season of discouragement, in which he seemed to stand alone, wondering at the almost universal abandonment of one who was seeking simply to honor CHRIST, and do good to mankind, by presenting the true principles of the gospel in all its relations ; he was, all at once, by an unexpected succor, lifted over the bar, and looked forward to fair sailing and deep waters. And he indulged in a sublime and defiant apostrophe to Sectarianism in his anticipated triumph over it. We would like to quote his words, for never was there a more vivid portraiture of this world-wide perversion of Christianity drawn, than that which burst from his impassioned lips ; but it would require the look, and tone, and gesture, as well as the language of a Stockton, to do it justice. But, as the friend and associate of Luther, in his anticipated triumph over the wickedness of human nature, found that Old Adam was too

strong for young Melancthon ; so Mr. Stockton soon found that Sectarianism was too strong for even the eloquence of his lips, and the fervor of his love. Entrenched behind the bulwarks of thirty different denominations, even in that very city, it laughed to scorn the might of the "slender one," and spurned his "Bible alliance" of "the pen, the pulpit, and the press." And so, after a brief struggle, in writing, preaching, and publishing his views, he was borne down by overwhelming odds, and adverse circumstances. But he had borne his testimony faithfully against unchristian divisions, and in favor of the Christian unity of the Church, in the Queen City of the West, as he had previously done in the City of Brotherly Love in the East. And Providence terminated his labors there by a call to Baltimore, Maryland, in the year 1850.

The call to Baltimore associated him with a dear and loving brother, A. Webster, D.D., as assistant minister of St. John's Church, in which he had many warm-hearted and generous friends. This Church and its pastor, and the Philadelphia Church and its pastor, had been placed in an independent position, by the action of the Maryland Annual Conference, in 1844, as a sort of compromise of the Mission Question, in leaving the Churches unsupplied,

and Mr. Stockton and Mr. Webster without appointments until the officaries of these churches should again ask to be supplied. This Church and its pastor accepted the position, and retained it by letting the Conference alone. And the Conference dropped them from the list of Churches and ministers: so that they thus became an independent Christian Church. Here, then, Mr. Stockton was in the midst of old friends, and, so far as this congregation was concerned, with congenial Church relations. Having but one service to attend to in St. John's on the Sabbath, he was at liberty to accept, and was subsequently invited to supply the pulpit of the Independent Congregation in Fayette street, left vacant by the demise of their pastor, John M. Duncan, D.D. He says of the six years spent in these pleasant connections, "Some of my most delightful memories belong to that interval." It was a season of rest to his weary spirit, and he enjoyed it; but he was not entirely satisfied. He was free to preach the Gospel in all its connections; but he was in a measure restricted in other directions; and his sensitive nature felt the slightest touch. Some of his best friends were of the opinion that preaching was his special calling, and regarded his schemes of usefulness outside of this calling, as inju-

rious to him ; and hence gave him neither sympathy nor encouragement in his projected publication of the "Bible in separate volumes, etc.," his "Bible Times," and "Bible Tracts."

Another thing caused him some embarrassment ; it was his position in the Church on Fayette street—"a temporary pastorate, with the pulpit frequently occupied by candidates for a permanent relation, making him feel as if he should stand aloof, except as duty imperatively called him to some of the homes of the people." And when at last the Church elected another minister to the pastorate, he decided to terminate his relation to St. John's Church also, and remove to Philadelphia in 1856.

On his return to this city he was at first without any pastoral charge, and gave his attention more to his Bible plan. He issued the New Testament in paragraph form, with all the marginal readings and full indexes. This is perhaps one of the most beautiful, as it is also one of the purest editions of the New Testament ever issued ; and was bound in one volume, or in separate books, to suit the wishes of purchasers. He published also "Horne and Tregelles' Introductions to the Books of the New Testament," "The Student's Memorandum," and "Bible Tracts ; or Leaves from the Tree of Life ; the design being, in whole, to supply a

series adapted to all varieties of minds and interests—maintaining Christian principles at all hazards.” But notwithstanding their excellency in matter and form, they obtained a very limited circulation, as was to be expected from the almost private manner in which they were published. “Of course the poor projector had a hard struggle, and, so far as continuance of his press was concerned, ultimately succumbed, saving, however, his principles, and having the satisfaction of knowing that some of his improvements, by the adoption of other publishers, became common possessions and blessings to the country at large.”

At sundry times he published several other pamphlets and books, as “The Pastor’s Tribute,” “Floating Flowers from a Hidden Brook,” “Something New,” “Addresses on the Bible; Temperance, Christian Union, etc.,” “The Bible Alliance,” “Occasional Sermons,” “The Blessing,” “Stand up for Jesus,” “Poems,” “The Peerless Magnificence of the Word of God,” and “Sermons for the People.” This last named was the only book regularly published, and has passed through several editions.

This Church (at Eleventh and Wood streets) was in the Philadelphia District of the Methodist Protestant Church, when Mr. Stockton left for

Cincinnati ; and so continued until the General Conference of 1850 annulled the District, for doing what four years previous it was allowed to do, when, along with the Ebenezer Church of Kensington, it became Independent. Mr. Ward, the successor of Mr. Stockton, labored with this Church usefully and successfully until sometime after Mr. Stockton's return to Philadelphia, when he resigned the pastorate, and united again with the Maryland Annual Conference : and the Church was induced to yield its independency and come under the control of the same Conference by uniting with, and transferring its property to, the Bethlehem Station—seceders from the Church on account of being opposed to the Mission question, when under Mr. Stockton's care, and before he left for Cincinnati. This step, it was thought, would ensure to the Methodist Protestants a Church in Philadelphia, free from debt, and in a flourishing condition ; as the Bethlehem *brethren* were to sell their property in Melon street, and pay the balance owing on Eleventh and Wood street house, and occupy it : and never seemed prospect brighter for such a consummation. After this transaction, Mr. Stockton, with some friends, rented a hall, where they met as the Church of the New Testament, having regular religious services and a Sunday

school, until providentially put again in temporary occupancy of the old house: for the Bethlehem Station, by some mismanagement, not only failed to dispose of the Melon street property, but, by retaining it, became more deeply involved in debt, and, at last, by due process of law, both houses were sold from them by their creditors. One of Mr. Stockton's friends attended the sale of this house (corner of Eleventh and Wood streets) to buy it for the Church of the New Testament; but was deterred from bidding by an assurance from the agent of the creditor, that he was going to bid it in for Mr. Stockton. When sold, however, the agent gave the name of the creditor as the purchaser, thus securing to her, for one-fourth of its value, a property mainly built by the contributions of the people to the house of God. An offer to purchase the property of the new owner by paying the mortgage, interest, and all expenses, was declined by the agent, on the ground that it was worth \$30,000: and it was only leased to Mr. Stockton for a certain number of years. This was, no doubt, meant to be a kindness, but it was a mistaken kindness; forasmuch as, if he should succeed in raising a church there, they would be liable to removal at the termination of the lease, or else have to purchase the property at

its full value. These contingent circumstances, together with Mr. Stockton's physical feebleness, operated against his success, and left him with only a few personal friends, who continued with him to the end.

In 1860 he was elected Chaplain to Congress, and re-elected in 1862. This called him to Washington during the sessions of Congress for four years, and his pulpit was supplied by others during his absence. During the first session of Congress after his election, by arrangement with the other chaplain, he preached every Sunday in the hall of the House of Representatives. And throughout the four sessions the audience was large, crowds being attracted by his eloquence; showing what, under favorable circumstances, he was still capable of doing. And it has been said, that he would have been elected for a third term, but for a report that he was sick, and physically unable to attend to the duties of the office. His mind and heart were in deep sympathy with the earnest struggle then in progress for the preservation of the Union, and his ministrations in Congress were imbued with the spirit of loyalty to his country, as well as of love to God and man. There was a believing earnestness in his praying, which carried *their* hearts who worshipped with him up to God, in supplication for Divine Wisdom

to guide them in the time of their country's peril. Such of his prayers as have been reported, and especially that at the dedication of the Soldiers' Cemetery at Gettysburg, are evidences of the intensity of his feelings in his country's cause, and were uttered with that wonderfully expressive manner which thrilled the hearts of his hearers. That prayer at Gettysburg was productive of spiritual awakening in many minds,—reaching the heart of our lamented President, and the hearts of the thousands who listened around him; and it hallowed forever the spot where sleep the remains of the brave ones who there fell in the defence of our homes. His sermons were perhaps not so ornate as when first Chaplain to Congress in former years, but they had more of the strength of the granite of truth, if less of the moss and ivy of adornment.

In 1865 his beloved wife, with whom he had lived thirty-seven years, departed this life. She was the mother of eleven children, to which he alludes in the following lines addressed to her on presenting to her the "Poems by Amelia," Christmas, 1846. "Your poems, my dear Anna, are in *eleven* volumes. *Two* of them, the LORD was so pleased with, that he has put them, in gold binding, on a pearl shelf, in his own Library in heaven. The other *nine* are

yet with us, awaiting his approval. May I stand by your side, when you see them *there*, in one complete and beautiful collection." After that, three more had gone before her, leaving six still, along with their father, to mourn her loss. But she died in the LORD, believing in the name of JESUS and trusting in his blood; and the hope of meeting her in a better life, and a glorious world, and a perfected condition, comforted their hearts in their sorrow.

From this time, until his death, he seldom preached, and was for the most of the time confined to the house; yet he was deeply solicitous that the Church of the New Testament should be sustained while he lived, and had his pulpit supplied by other brethren; being himself present as often as convenient, and occasionally greeting his little flock with words of encouragement and hope. During this period he was busy with his pen and manuscript, committing to paper and arranging thoughts, which may possibly, at some time, be given to the world through the press; and in this way, perhaps, he may yet speak the unsearchable riches of CHRIST to thousands, making those home hours of comparative obscurity to blossom and bear fruit which shall be a blessing to the world.

He was always pleased to see his friends, and was ever resigned, contented, cheerful. There was no censoriousness in his conversation. His mind was placid as a lake unruffled by the winds, and his thoughts flowed out in a pure and refreshing stream, which made it a privilege and a pleasure to visit him. There was no fault-finding with others for their want of sympathy with him, and appreciation of his position and plans; no complaint of abandonment. He rested in the Divine love and his heart was satisfied. He saw—

“A God employed
In all the good and ill that chequer life,
Resolving all events, with their effects
And manifold results, into the will
And arbitration wise of the Supreme.”

Among the few who visited him during this period was Mr. Alfred Cookman, minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who relates the following incident: At one of those interviews he said, characteristically, “Brother Cookman, my life in retrospect, seems like *a modern canal*. In my earlier history, I floated along, until God, by his Providential interpositions, answering to locks, lifted me to higher levels, and so I came after a while to my highest level. Then the same Providence, by its dispensations, began to let me down, and I have been sinking lower

and lower, until now, I seem to have reached my lowest level. Some of these days, the unseen hand will open the last gate, and my soul will float out into the boundless and fathomless ocean of everlasting bliss—an ocean, forever bright with heaven's own brightness." And here, in his own expressive language, we have an estimate of his life, which corresponds with our opinion based on the leading facts of his history, and suggested by the similarity discovered between them and the leading events of the ministry of John the Baptist, of whom JESUS said, "He was a burning and a shining light, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." We are too apt to form our estimate of men from the adventitious circumstances of success, which gives them renown and denominates them great in the eyes of the world. Lacking these, life is regarded as a failure. And so the life of this eminent servant of GOD is balanced in the Ledger of Denominational commerce. But, while we allow that, to all appearance, in ecclesiastical results, and even in regard to his own peculiar plan, as the world views things, his life was a failure, we nevertheless demur to this judgment as superficial and worldly, leaving out of the account the *principles* of his life and the *Divine dispensations* which controlled it.

To illustrate our point we will trace a few of the resemblances between the ministry of John the Baptist and the ministry of Mr. Stockton. John the Baptist lacked the scholastic training, which is too often the substitute for a Divine call to the ministry. His training was in the deserts, where he waxed strong in spirit, till the day of his showing unto Israel. Mr. Stockton says of himself, "What was my preparation? None at all in the ordinary professional sense. But, by nature, providence and grace; by home, school and church; by the Bible, and the general range of English literature, so far as it came within my reach, and proved attractive, I had been made observant, thoughtful, reverent and prayerful—had been awakened to a consciousness of at least seeming adaptation, with some impressions of duty, some impulse of desire, and some effort in self-culture. When I sat in the congregation, under the ministry of 'the Gospel,' it was natural for me to look and listen intently, not only with sensibility, but also synthetically and analytically, assuring myself pretty well of the plan and process of discussion, and deriving from the service and exercise more advantage, perhaps, than I then supposed. This I believe was all or nearly all. Thus I became a preacher." Thus he was in the deserts of un-

collegiate education, waxing strong in spirit, till the day he preached his first sermon.

John the Baptist began his ministry as a reformer. So did Mr. Stockton, and both, not only in calling men individually to repent of their sins and believe in CHRIST, but, also, in reproving the mischievous tendencies of usurped authority and arbitrary power in the rulers, of the professing Church of God.

John the Baptist's was a special ministry. When the LORD has a special work to be done, he raises up special agencies for its performance. John was the herald of the MESSIAH, sent before his face to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins; and prepare the Jewish nation for the reception of the HOLY ONE. He was the morning star of the advent, reflecting the brilliant rays of the Sun of righteousness; and was a witness of that light. Mr. Stockton's ministry was also of a special character. He seemed to be providentially raised up for a special work, and particularly qualified for its performance. He became the herald of Christian union, and anti-sectarianism. Not of an "Evangelical alliance," consisting in the agreement of so-called orthodox sects in everlasting separateness; but the extinction of all sects in the inseparable oneness

of the Christian brotherhood. The professed liberality of the Methodist Protestant Church afforded him an open field for the publication of his views, from both pulpit and press; and their acknowledgment of the Bible as the only rule of faith and conduct, and of CHRIST as the only head of the Church, afforded ground of hope, that he might here find a fulcrum on which to rest the lever of CHRIST's prayer for the oneness of his followers, and eventually overthrow the division-walls of Sectarianism.

John the Baptist's ministry was a success so far as the performance of his distinctive work was concerned: he accomplished his mission; he completed his testimony; he fulfilled his course; but so far as the preparation of the people was concerned it was a failure. Some indeed who heard his voice, as it rang in silvery tones through the wilderness of Judea, believed on the coming One, and were baptized confessing their sins; but as a nation they repented not, neither were made ready for his coming. It was necessary that the messenger of the LORD of hosts should be sent before him to proclaim his coming, and warn the sinful nation to repent and receive him, that he might perform the covenant made with the fathers; but they were free to receive or reject his testimony; and, as GOD foresaw they would, so

did they reject it, and frustrate the proposed blessing the ministry of John was calculated to achieve. In like manner Mr. Stockton's ministry was both a success and a failure. With himself, in his consciousness of duty and its faithful performance, it was a success. With the Sects, whom he sought to unite in the oneness of truth and love, it was a failure. True there were some, not only among the Methodist Protestants, but in all the sects, who sympathized with him in his work, and were baptized into its spirit, and waited and longed for the union of all Christians in one body: but the various denominations are not prepared for such an event, and are no more ready *now* to renounce their sectarian differences for simple Christian Union, than they were before he began his testimony. Indeed the tendency is rather to divide still more than to unite; even the Methodist Protestant Church, instead of profiting by his ministry in this respect, has separated into two or more sects.

John the Baptist's ministry had its increase and its decrease. His beginning was great, for he was endowed with extraordinary gifts. God qualified him for an extraordinary service. The words, "He was a burning and a shining light," indicate the fervor of his spirit and the brilliancy of his gifts. Sanctified and filled

with the Holy Spirit from his birth, the Divine inspiration quickened his perceptions of truth and duty, fired his heart with love and zeal, and gave him an utterance of unrivalled eloquence, which held spell-bound the thousands who flocked to his ministry. And he rose to a height of power and grace in his prophetic mission, unsurpassed by any one of woman born: though the least in the future glorious kingdom of heaven shall be greater than he then was. How great John would have become had the nation believed his testimony, repented of their sins, and received the coming One, we know not. They "were willing for a season to rejoice in his light," and then its beams grew brighter, and success in the object of his mission seemed attainable; but after a while, his faithfulness in reproving them for their sins offended them; and their unbelief and hardness of heart occasioned his decline. His light began to wane, and at last his ministry was terminated by his being cast into prison and there beheaded. His work was done, though Israel was not saved. The fulfilment of his mission was his success: the national unbelief, was his failure. In like manner, the ministry of Mr. Stockton had its flow and its ebb. Its beginning was bright and glowing. Mrs. Welby adds to what we have already quoted,

“ There’s a charm in delivery, a magical art,
That thrills like a kiss, from the lip to the heart ;
’Tis the glance—the expression—the well chosen
word,
By whose magic the depths of the spirit are stirred,
The smile—the mute gesture—the soul startling
pause,
The eye’s sweet expression—that melts while it awes,
The lip’s soft persuasion—its musical tone—
O such was the charm of that eloquent one.

“ All glorious and bright as a spirit of air,
The light like a halo encircling his hair—
As I catch the ‘*rich*’ accents of sweetness and love,
He whispers of Jesus—and points us above.”

His were extraordinary gifts, sanctified by abounding grace. “ He was,” also, “ a burning and a shining light:” and as the sun waxes warmer and brighter as it rises to the zenith, so his ministry became more powerful and brilliant in his ascent to that unrivalled eloquence which distinguished it, and that noble object to which he devoted it.

He was the prince of modern preachers, with stately form and dignified mien—high receding forehead and long silvery hair—smooth pallid face and large, penetrating eye—expressive, smiling mouth and trumpet voice, of marvellous compass and power and sweetest cadences, he seemed almost angelic, and stirred, entranced and thrilled the vast assemblies to

whom he ministered with the glorious truths he uttered. Many were won to CHRIST, to truth and virtue by his ministrations, who shall be his joy and crown in the day of the LORD JESUS.

Acknowledging the Bible alone as the Book of GOD and the only infallible authority on earth, he rose above all partyism and sectarian restrictions, and reached the acme of his ministrations in his plea for the union of all Christians. In this object, his mind was intensely interested. Following the example of JESUS he prayed for it. Believing it to be the Saviour's will, he preached it. Deeming it practicable, he toiled and suffered for it. It was the specialty of his ministry; that, to which, in his enlightened consciousness, he believed himself called of GOD. And there was attending this belief a sort of inspiration—the inspiration of enthusiasm, but not of fanaticism. He was elevated, excited, rapt with the love of the truth, and ardent in the pursuit of his object; and, in its advocacy, he gave utterance to, and published some of the most sublime thoughts that ever emanated from an uninspired mind. Take this for an example: “Only let this One, Divinely Established New Testament Church, be practically exemplified:—Only let the Church in the House, BE ONE, in Every House; the Church

in the City, BE ONE, in Every City : and the Church Every where, BE ONE, Every where :— Only let the Churches of a Province, BE ONE, Throughout the Province : and the Churches of the Empire, or of the Whole World, BE ONE, Throughout the Empire or World :—Only let the Churches of the Jews and of the Gentiles, or of All Nations, notwithstanding National Distinctions, BE ONE :—Only let the Church in Whole, Throughout All Ages, Resume and Retain its ONENESS : Only let the Whole Family, or Church, in Heaven and Earth, be Duly Recognized and Acknowledged in its ONENESS : ONE IN GOD—ONE IN CHRIST—ONE IN THE SPIRIT :—Only let the Divinely Honored Ministry and Membership, of this Infinitely Excelling and Redeeming Social Institution—give heed to the plaintive but glorious voice of the Imprisoned Apostle, beseeching them in the name of the Lord to Walk Worthy of the Vocation wherewith they are Called, with All Lowliness and Meekness, with Long-Suffering, Forbearing One Another in Love ; endeavoring to Keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace : Showing to the World, that there is but One Body, and One Spirit, even as they are Called in One Hope of their calling ; One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of All, Who is Above All, and Through

All, and In Them All: and the Ignorant and hitherto Unbelieving World, being thus Convinced of All, and Judged of All, and having the Secret Corruption of its Heart made Manifest by the Contrast, will Fall Down on its Face, and Worship God, and Acknowledge that God is With His People Of A Truth! Herein is Entire and Eternal Salvation! I speak concerning Christ and the Church."

There is no fanaticism in such utterances. How harmoniously they chime in with the vibrations of eternal truth rung out by the hand of Paul! How sweetly they accord with the Oracles of our Great High Priest, when, at the institution of the Lord's Supper, he prayed that all, all who should believe on him might be One, in him, and in the Father, as he and the Father are One! What simplicity and sublimity are combined in the thoughts of this gifted apostle, apologist and advocate of a church-forsaken, forgotten and downtrodden truth! Herein he reached a ministration outside of all parties and above all parties—a ministration purely Christian and apostolical—a ministration to which it was a Divine honor to be called, and a glory to be counted worthy of it. And how great he might have become even in human estimation, had the different Denominations but listened to his voice, and discarding

all names but the name of CHRIST, and renouncing all creeds but the BIBLE, rushed, with the mighty impulse of brotherly love, into each other's embrace, in CHRISTIAN ONENESS; we know not: but, we doubt not, that in the sight of the LORD, his meekly suffering servant, walking in the light of his Word, esteeming his precepts concerning all things to be right, and hating every false way; faithful to his trust through all trial; true to his principles at all hazards, was, in the loneliness of his abandonment, greater than he would have been in the prelatical robes and palatial halls of sectarian exclusiveness, to which he might have attained by the use of his noble powers for selfish ends. And, we doubt not, that, in joyfully filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of CHRIST in his flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church, he has attained a higher station, and a brighter glory in the Kingdom of God; abundantly compensating him for any want of success in the object of his ministry. The ONENESS of Christians in opposition to Sectarianism could not be tolerated by the Sects, and the Sects rule Christendom; and from the minister of that oneness, as in the case of his Divine Master, they hid their faces; he was despised and they esteemed him not. As long as his ministry was simply theological and ethical

they were willing "to rejoice in his light;" but when by his plea for the union of all Christians he rebuked their divisions, they in effect said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live." Still he had "the pleasure of reflecting that he was identified with the wisest and the best people on earth;" but they were few and widely scattered, and most of them so related to Denominationalisms that they could do nothing to help, and generally subsided into the opinion, that the time for Christian Union had not yet come. In this "utter abandonment," however, his confidence in the principles of his enterprise never forsook him; and he still believed in the practicability of success. He learned at last to say with John, "*I must decrease.*" What then? Were his principles false? No. Was his mission a mistake? No. Was his ministry a failure? In relation to himself and to God? No. In relation to its object? Yes. His principles were Divine; his mission was providential, and his ministry was in demonstration of the spirit and power; but Sectarianism was too strong for the meek and modest truth, though its standard bearer was the gifted child of eloquence, and mighty in the scriptures; and the leaders of the people would not receive his message; and so, to use his own appropriate

figure, descending by providential interpositions, to the end of his ministry, he floated out of his frail body, into the bosom of the All-loving FATHER, freighted with the blessings, which, unwelcomed by the sects, returned again to his own bosom.

What then? Shall these principles fail? In this Sectarian age: *yes*. They who crucified the messenger will not receive the message. Crucified did we say? Hark! He speaks, "Tell me, my Friends!—do you think that you appreciate the effect of an *utter abandonment by his bosom companions, and whispered imputations of suspected derangement*, on a person of nervous constitution and retired habits, settled as eternity in his principles, constrained by his conscience to do something for their advancement, but baffled in all his efforts by the want of approving coadjutors? Do you think that you know how to estimate the silent griefs of lapsing years in such a condition?" *We call that crucifixion.* But shall those principles utterly fail? No INDEED: for, as we have often heard him repeat, The time will come, "When the might with the right and the truth shall
be :

And come what may, to stand in the way, that Day
the world shall see."

The time will come when the crucified LORD of

all the crucified ones, shall return to earth, and separating the true from the false, shall make them *ONE with HIMSELF even as he is ONE with the FATHER* in fulfilment of his sacerdotal prayer. And then, shall the brow of this apostle of Union be wreathed with a garland of unfading glory.

WHAT, *then*, is our estimate of the character of Mr. Stockton? Briefly this, that physically, intellectually, morally, socially and spiritually, he was a chosen vessel unto CHRIST,—adapted specially for the work to which he was called; having the highest qualifications for it, and the most intense appreciation of it, and the most ardent desire for its accomplishment, and a steadfast perseverance in it unto the end.

With a vigorous ideality, he had large perceptive faculties, by which he almost intuitively attained the knowledge of whatever engaged his attention; and by his accurate reasoning he almost invariably reached right conclusions. His convictions, therefore, were almost like divine revelations; formed as they were from an extensive acquaintance with the truths of the Bible and absolutely controlled by them. This gave fixedness to his principles and determined his course, which his conscientiousness made a moral necessity. And no temptations of high position, which his talents

and opportunities might have secured; no enticements of worldly ease, which offered themselves; could draw him aside from what he considered his duty. But what he valued most—the Christian Spirit—he eminently possessed—steadfast faith, ardent love, cheerful obedience and joyful hope. This spirit sanctified all his relations as a man, a son, a brother, a husband, a father, a friend, a citizen. In this spirit he consecrated all his faculties and energies to the service of CHRIST; and in this spirit he overcame the world, and gained a crown of life.

He kept a regular diary for years, in which he noted daily occurrences, and passing thoughts. We have the privilege of opening to you the last two entries. They relate to his sickness, its probable result, and his wishes in view of it. He says:

“August 15, 1868. All I can say just now is, that, if I die, I wish to die as a CHRISTIAN—nothing more, nothing less: a Christian—an humble disciple of our LORD and Saviour JESUS CHRIST—to be acknowledged by him, I trust, through grace (whether by men or not), as the brother, however unworthy, of every other Christian, on earth or in heaven. As such, I hope to be a joint heir with HIM, and so with them, in attainment and enjoyment of the

eternal life—I repeat my conviction, that, all that God is to man, He is in CHRIST; and all that man is to God, he is in CHRIST—so that CHRIST is all and in all.” All of God to all of his people.

“August 22. I am extremely weak:—So I still wait. It seems that nothing more can be done than they are doing. Once more, therefore, I here resign myself entirely unto thy mercy in CHRIST JESUS, O thou GOD of my Salvation! For myself, my children, my relatives and friends generally,—as for the Church, and for all men,—I have no higher hope, no other prayer, than that, *Thy will may be done!* Amen—forever.”

He had looked forward to the 10th of August, the anniversary of his mother's death, with a kind of feeling that perhaps he should die then. And afterwards, toward the 16th of September, the anniversary of his wife's death, thinking he might pass away at that time. But as this latter day passed by without the change; he had an entry made in his Diary, closing with these words, “But—I gratefully and quietly submit. All is right.”

During his last sickness, early in September, shortly after he was compelled to remain in bed, he remarked in the course of conversation, “I have no fear of death. I can have none.

"Tis not in the nature of things for me to have. I have tried to do things as well as I could in the midst of difficulties and thousands of sins; but I trust in GOD for forgiveness and salvation."

Another time—at midnight—he was exceedingly weak, and dropped into a sleep, which was so quiet that he was thought to be dying. After a short time, however, he opened his eyes, and looking directly at those who watched at his bed-side, said:

"And are we yet alive,
And see each other's face?
Glory and praise to Jesus give
For his redeeming grace."

Afterward, remarking that his mind seemed to be in a wonderfully poetic humor, he recited probably a score of pieces, including hymns, etc. Among other quotations, were these lines, which he admired very much, as being turned so beautifully; repeating them several times:

"Time will subdue;
What will not Time subdue?"

And another, the hymn,

"In age and feebleness extreme,
Who shall a helpless worm redeem?
'Tis only JESUS, by his blood,
Can raise a sinking soul to God.
JESUS, my only hope thou art,
Strength of my fainting flesh and heart,
O, could I catch a smile from thee,
And drop into Eternity!"

At still another time he said, "There are three passages of Scripture that are of particular interest, as expressing, at different times, my condition. The first is this: 'What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.' Then I got so I could say, 'I will trust in the LORD and not be afraid.' Then I got on further, till I can now say, 'Trust in the LORD for ever, for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.' "

"I tell you, my children, I am very near the end; I must have the doctor's candid opinion to-night, and if he says it is so, I will say, Thank the LORD! 'The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law: but thanks be unto GOD, who giveth us the victory through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.' There is no sting in death to me; that is all taken away, and now the victory is mine."

"O, my! how I desire, and how my desires increase, to know things as they are; to be at the centre of all intelligence, and understand all the truths in nature, providence, and grace; to see the Saviour as he is, in all his dignity and grandeur. Mine eyes shall see the glory of the risen LORD."

"O, to be 'swallowed up of life!' 'To depart and be with CHRIST, which is far better.' I trust—I trust that 'for me to live is CHRIST, to die is gain.' "

“I am now approaching the moment which I have always considered of the greatest importance—extinction or continuance of being. *Philosophy* says extinction! *Infidelity* says extinction! *Sense* says extinction! FAITH says *Immortality*! RELIGION says *Immortality*! CHRISTIANITY says *Immortality*! One thing is certain: Something has always been; Something continues to exist. If the individual falls, Life still continues in the race. Infidelity cannot gainsay this.

“O, could I catch a smile from thee,
And drop into Eternity!”

“I trust I am going to see the grandest thing in the universe; the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, shining in the face of CHRIST JESUS our LORD.”

“‘He doth all things well. I have reason for nothing but great gratitude; great thanksgiving; great rejoicing.’”

“I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand: I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them, also, that love his appearing.’ I have fought the fight, but not perfectly; I have run the race, but not

well ; I have kept the faith against men and all opposition ; yes, I have kept the faith. That is the banner ; I have held fast to that, and now I trust to receive a crown of glory."

" I feel very weak, and it makes no difference when I go : but I expect to find something worthy of the infinite dignity of God ; something respectfully comprehensive of all humiliaties."

" If you hear anybody speak in confidence of me, tell them I consider myself nothing but a poor sinner."

" The issues in my case are so different from what I expected : I thought I might have lived ten years longer yet. But it is all right. ' He doth all things well.' I cannot tell you how happy I am at the prospect of getting at the centre of universal intelligence through the mercy of God in CHRIST JESUS our LORD. I am nothing but a poor sinner, and have been all my life ; but JESUS is a precious Saviour, God a kind and loving Father, the HOLY SPIRIT a blessed sanctifier."

Such were some of the utterances which fell from his dying lips—lips that were ever wont to extol the Saviour, and magnify the riches of redeeming grace ; lips that were never weary with repeating the ever-blessed name, and to the last were eloquent in his praise. But they

are now hushed in death, and silent in the grave. On Friday night, October 9th., 1868, at a quarter before eight o'clock, his spirit passed away. "Conscious to the last, leaning on the rod and staff of the Good Shepherd, he passed from our sight away down into the valley of the shadow of death, comforted." Fitting end of a noble life! A life hallowed in our memories by its purity, its peacefulness, its gentleness, its willingness, its forgiveness, its goodness, its impartiality and sincerity; traits of the wisdom that is from above, which assimilates the human character to the Divine, and rises again to the source from whence it came, carrying with it, into the bosom of God, the redeemed and sanctified spirit, and making it ONE WITH GOD.

PULPIT ELOQUENCE.

FROM POEMS BY AMELIA (MRS. WELBY).

THE day was declining—the breeze, in its glee,
Had left the fair blossoms to sing on the sea,
As the sun, in its gorgeousness, radiant and still,
Dropped down, like a gem, from the brow of the hill;
One tremulous star, in the glory of June,
Came out with a smile and sat down by the moon,
As she graced her blue throne with the pride of a
 queen,
The smiles of her loveliness gladdening the scene.

The scene was enchanting! in distance away
Rolled the foam-crested waves of the Chesapeake bay,
While bathed in the moonlight, the village was seen,
With the church in the distance, that stood on the
 green,
The soft-sloping meadows lay brightly unrolled,
With their mantles of verdure and blossoms of gold,
And the earth, in her beauty, forgetting to grieve,
Lay asleep in her bloom on the bosom of eve.

A light-hearted child, I had wandered away
From the spot where my footsteps had gambolled all
 day,
And free as a bird's, was the song of my soul,
As I heard the wild waters exultingly roll,

While, lightening my heart as I sported along;
With bursts of low laughter and snatches of song,
I struck in the pathway half-worn o'er the sod
By the feet that went up to the worship of God.

As I traced its green windings, a murmur of prayer,
With the hymn of the worshippers, rose on the air;
And, drawn by the links of its sweetness along,
I stood unobserved in the midst of the throng.
For awhile my young spirit still wandered about
With the birds and the winds that were singing with-
out,
But birds, waves, and zephyrs, were quickly forgot
In one angel-like being that brightened the spot.

In stature majestic, apart from the throng,
He stood in his beauty, the theme of my song!
His cheek pale with fervor—the blue orbs above
Lit up with the splendors of youth and of love;
Yet the heart-glowing raptures, that beamed from
those eyes,
Seemed saddened by sorrows, and chastened by sighs,
As if the young heart in its bloom had grown cold,
With its loves unrequited, its sorrows untold.

Such language as his I may never recall;
But his theme was salvation—salvation for all:
And the souls of a thousand in ecstasy hung
On the manna-like sweetness that dropped from his
tongue;
Not alone on the ear his wild eloquence stole;
Enforced by each gesture, it sank to the soul,
Till it seemed that an angel had brightened the sod,
And brought to each bosom a message from God.

He spoke of the Saviour—what pictures he drew !
The scene of His sufferings rose clear on my view
The cross—the rude cross where He suffered and died,
The gush of bright crimson that flowed from His side,
The cup of His sorrows, the wormwood and gall,
The darkness that mantled the earth as a pall,
The garland of thorns, and the demon-like crews,
Who knelt as they scoffed Him—“ Hail, King of the
Jews ! ”

He spake, and it seemed that his statue-like form
Expanded and glowed as his spirit grew warm ;
His tone so impassioned, so melting his air,
As, touched with compassion, he ended in prayer,
His hands clasped above him, his blue orbs upthrown,
Still pleading for sins that were never his own,
While that mouth, where such sweetness ineffable
clung,
Still spoke, though expression had died on his tongue.

O God ! what emotions the speaker awoke !
A mortal he seemed—yet a deity spoke ;
A man—yet so far from humanity riven ;
On earth—yet so closely connected with heaven !
How oft in my fancy I've pictured him there,
As he stood in that triumph of passion and prayer,
With his eyes closed in rapture—their transient
eclipse
Made bright by the smiles that illumined his lips.

There's a charm in delivery, a magical art,
That thrills, like a kiss, from the lip to the heart,
'Tis the glance—the expression—the well-chosen word,
By whose magic the depths of the spirit are stirred,

The smile—the mute gesture—the soul-startling pause,
The eye's sweet expression—that melts while it awes,
The lip's soft persuasion—its musical tone—
O, such was the charm of that eloquent one!

The time is long past, yet how clearly defined,
That bay, church, and village float up on my mind!
I see amid azure the moon in her pride,
With the sweet little trembler that sat by her side,
I hear the blue waves, as she wanders along,
Leap up in their gladness and sing her a song,
And I tread in the pathway half-worn o'er the sod
By the feet that went up to the worship of God.

The time is long past, yet what visions I see!
The past, the dim past is the present to me;
I am standing once more mid that heart-stricken
throng,

A vision floats up—'tis the theme of my song,
All glorious and bright as a spirit of air,
The light like a halo encircling his hair,
As I catch the same accents of sweetness and love,
He whispers of Jesus—and points us above.

How sweet to my heart is the picture I've traced!
Its chain of bright fancies seemed almost effaced,
Till memory, the fond one, that sits in the soul,
Took up the frail links, and connected the whole;
As the dew to the blossom, the bud to the bee,
As the scent to the rose, are these memories to me
Round the chords of my heart they have tremblingly
clung,
And the echo it gives is the song I have sung.





